

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY PARIS
JCRC BARBERS PT HAWAII
CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII 0000

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 182871

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: VIETNAM FAMILY REUNIONS
REF: A. STATE 174187; B. STATE 180315; C. STATE 157218
1. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY (HA) FRANK SIEVERTS DISCUSSED
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VIETNAM FAMILY REUNIFICATION WITH VU HOANG, WHO HEADED SRV
DELEGATION FOR MIA DISCUSSIONS IN HONOLULU JULY 11-14. IN
ADDITION TO HIS MIA RESPONSIBILITIES, VU HOANG IS DIRECTOR
OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS IN SRV FOREIGN MINISTRY, WITH RESPONSIBILITY
FOR FAMILY REUNION AND OTHER EMIGRATION QUESTIONS.

2. ON SUBJECT OF THE 15 CHILDREN AND THEIR MOTHERS WHOSE

RELEASE WAS COMMUNICATED TO SENATOR KENNEDY (REF C) VU HOANG SAID THIS WAS IN PROCESS OF FINAL ARRANGEMENTS, AND THAT THIS GROUP WOULD DEPART WITH A DELEGATION BEING FORMED BY KENNEDY'S OFFICE, WHICH WILL INCLUDE ARCHBISHOP PHILIP HANNAN OF NEW ORLEANS, PRESIDENT JEAN MAYER (M.D. SPECIALIZING IN NUTRITION) OF TUFTS UNIVERSITY; DR. LASALLE LEFFALL, CANCER SPECIALIST, HOWARD UNIVERSITY, PRESIDENT-ELECT OF AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY; MS. MILDRED KAUFMAN, DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION, SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA; AND KENNEDY REFUGEE COMMITTEE STAFF DIRECTOR JERRY TINKER. THIS GROUP PLANS TO ARRIVE HANOI JULY 31 (VIA AIR VIETNAM FLIGHT FROM BANGKOK) RETURNING TO BANGKOK WITH THE CHILDREN AND MOTHERS AROUND AUGUST 7. KENNEDY

GROUP PLANS ENLIST HELP OF ICRC IN VIETNAM IN ARRANGING DEPARTURE OF CHILDREN. AMERICAN RED CROSS PLANS TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO BANGKOK TO ASSIST U.S. CONSULAR OFFICERS IN RECEIVING THE CHILDREN AND ARRANGING FOR THEIR RETURN TO THE U.S.

3. WE WILL SEND FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CHILDREN WHEN IT BECOMES AVAILABLE TO US. AMERICAN RED CROSS LIST GIVEN TO VIETNAMESE BY KENNEDY STAFFER IS BEING HAND CARRIED TO BANGKOK BY JCRC LIAISON LT. COL. PAUL MATHER. WE ASSUME REVISED LIST OF THOSE ACTUALLY COMING WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE VIETNAMESE, AND WILL SEND IT TO CONFIDENTIAL

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BANGKOK AS SOON AS IT IS RECEIVED.

4. FOLLOWING VU HOANG'S ASSURANCES THAT THIS GROUP'S DEPARTURE WAS WELL IN HAND, SIEVERTS RAISED SUBJECT OF FAMILY REUNIONS FOR OTHER RELATIVES IN VIETNAM, NOTING THAT THE HUMAN ASPECTS OF THIS PROBLEM WERE THE SAME REGARDLESS OF THE PASSPORT OR VISA STATUS. VU HOANG SAID ALL THESE QUESTIONS COULD BE BETTER HANDLED FOLLOWING NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS. SIEVERTS RESPONDED THAT HE HOPED A START COULD BE MADE ON THIS HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM WITHOUT WAITING FOR NORMALIZATION TO BE COMPLETED. VU HOANG UNDERTOOK TO CO-OPERATE, BUT NOTED THAT SUBJECT HAD TO BE HANDLED ON AN INDIVIDUAL CASE-BY-CASE BASIS.

5. SIEVERTS THEN PROVIDED A REVISED LIST OF SOME 300 CHILDREN, WIVES AND FIANCES OF AMERICAN CITIZENS COMPILED BY THE AMERICAN RED CROSS (COPY OF THIS LIST ALSO BEING HAND CARRIED BY COL. MATHER). VU HOANG ACCEPTED LIST AND RECEIVED SIEVERTS' ASSURANCES THAT EACH CASE HAD BEEN CHECKED AND THAT WE WERE CONFIDENT THESE RELATIVES ALL DESIRED AND QUALIFIED FOR FAMILY REUNION. VU HOANG SAID THAT EACH CASE HAD TO BE CHECKED CAREFULLY AND THIS TOOK TIME. SIEVERTS

SAID PERHAPS THE ICRC OR VIETNAMESE RED CROSS COULD ASSIST IN THIS PROJECT, IN VIEW OF ITS OBVIOUS HUMANITARIAN CHARACTER.

6. VU HOANG STRESSED THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL FOR THOSE IN VIETNAM DESIRING DEPARTURE TO APPLY TO THE PROPER OFFICES, WHICH HE SAID WERE UNDER HIS SUPERVISION. UNLESS AN APPLICATION IS INITIATED BY THE RELATIVE IN VIETNAM IT IS DIFFICULT TO START THE PROCESS, HE SAID. SIEVERTS ASKED VU HOANG IF HE WOULD PROVIDE A COPY OF THE APPLICATION FORM SO THAT FAMILIES IN THE U.S. COULD BE ADVISED OF THIS PROCEDURE. VU HOANG SAID HE WOULD DO SO THROUGH THE SRV EMBASSY IN BANGKOK, WHERE HE PLANNED TO STOP FOR A FEW DAYS. EMBASSY IN BANGKOK, WHERE HE PLANNED TO STOP FOR A FEW DAYS
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JULY 18-20.

7. IN THIS CONNECTION, VU HOANG SAID HE WAS GRATEFUL TO CONSUL GENERAL ANTIPPAS FOR ISSUING U.S. VISAS IN BANGKOK ON A SUNDAY, AND HAD BEEN PLEASED TO MEET THE ANTIPPAS FAMILY. SIEVERTS SAID THAT ANTIPPAS WAS A PERSONAL FRIEND WITH WHOM HE HAD WORKED CLOSELY THROUGH THE YEARS ON FAMILY REUNIONS AND SIMILAR PROBLEMS. SIEVERTS AND VU HOANG AGREED IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR ANTIPPAS TO HAVE CONTINUING CONTACT ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION QUESTIONS WITH SRV EMBASSY BANGKOK.

8. IN LIGHT OF THIS CONVERSATION, WE RECOMMEND ANTIPPAS CONTACT SRV EMBASSY AGAIN TO SEEK INFORMAL MEETING WITH VU HOANG JULY 20, TO LAY BASIS FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE COOPERATION ON FAMILY REUNION MATTERS.

9. VIETNAMESE ALSO RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO USE OF BANGKOK FOR EXCHANGE OF MIA INFORMATION, FOR WHICH ANTIPPAS AND JCRC LIAISON OFFICER LT. COL. MATHER, WOULD BE APPROPRIATE CHANNEL, IN OUR JUDGMENT. SUGGEST ANTIPPAS FOLLOW UP ON BOTH THESE POINTS IF HE IS ABLE TO SEE VU HOANG.

10. OVER AND ABOVE THE 300 CASES ON THE RED CROSS LIST, SIEVERTS RAISED BROADER SUBJECT OF FAMILY REUNIONS FOR VIETNAMESE WHO ARE NOT RELATED TO U.S. CITIZENS. VU HOANG THOUGHT THIS ALSO WOULD BE POSSIBLE IN THE FUTURE, AND AGREED UNHCR WOULD BE APPROPRIATE AGENCY TO ASSIST ON THIS SUBJECT. HE SEVERAL TIMES EMPHASIZED THAT SRV POLICY WAS TO PERMIT PEOPLE TO LEAVE IF THEY WANTED TO, BUT STRESSED THAT PROPER PROCEDURES HAD TO BE FOLLOWED.

11. IN THIS CONNECTION VU HOANG NOTED THAT THE PROBLEM WITH THE PRC WAS THEIR UNWILLINGNESS TO FOLLOW ORDERLY PROCEDURE.
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CEDURES, WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS INTENTIONAL PROVOCATION ON THEIR PART. AS SOON AS HE RETURNED TO HANOI VU HOANG SAID HE WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF THE CHINESE BOATS WAITING TO TAKE CHINESE FROM HO CHI MINH-VILLE.

12. COMMENT: VU HOANG IS CLEARLY AN AUTHORITATIVE FIGURE ON FAMILY REUNION AND OTHER CONSULAR MATTERS. ONCE AN SRV DECISION IS MADE ON THIS SUBJECT, WE SUSPECT HE IS IN THE KEY POSITION TO IMPLEMENT IT EXPEDITIOUSLY, AS IN THE CASE OF THE 15 CHILDREN AND THEIR MOTHERS ON SENATOR KENNEDY'S LIST. HE IS FAIRLY FREE WITH ASSURANCES OF CO-OPERATION ON THESE SUBJECTS (AS HE HAS BEEN IN THE PAST TO UNHCR AND ICRC REPRESENTATIVES) BUT IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THERE WILL BE RESULTS ON THE FURTHER CASES PRIOR TO NORMALIZATION OF US-SRV RELATIONS.

13. FOR GENEVA: PLEASE INFORM ICRC (HOCKE) OF POSSIBLE ROLE FOR THEM IN ASSISTING WITH THE DEPARTURE OF THE

CHILDREN AND MOTHERS WITH SENATOR KENNEDY'S DELEGATION. SUGGEST BANGKOK ALSO FOLLOW UP ON THIS WITH ICRC DELEGATION THERE. WE UNDERSTAND KENNEDY'S STAFF WILL ALSO BE IN TOUCH WITH ICRC ON THIS SUBJECT.

14. GENEVA SHOULD ALSO TELL ICRC OF SIEVERTS' UNDERSTANDING WITH VU HOANG THAT ICRC WOULD CONTINUE TO PLAY A ROLE IN FAMILY REUNION EFFORTS FOR THE 300 CASES RELATED TO U.S. CITIZENS, WHOSE NAMES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED ON AMERICAN RED CROSS LIST. NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS NO DATE OR FIRM ASSURANCE ON THIS GROUP.

15. GENEVA SHOULD INFORM UNHCR (HAN AND DAYAL FOR HARTLING) OF INTENDED UNHCR ROLE IN BROADER CATEGORY OF VIETNAMESE REUNION CASES, ON WHICH WE HOPE HARTLING WILL FOLLOW UP DURING HIS SEPTEMBER VISIT TO HANOI.

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16. PLEASE INFORM ICRC AND UNHCR (SEPARATELY) THAT VU HOANG SPOKE FAVORABLY OF CONTACTS HE HAS HAD WITH THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AND HEADQUARTERS OFFICIALS WHO HAVE VISITED VIETNAM.

CHRISTOPHER

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